

# “Bokuchu” Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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I'm sure all of you are similar in some way, but when you're a kid, your mind works in evil ways. Even I, now a model citizen, used to think up all kinds of evilness.

Although unintentional, the police became involved with some of these evil deeds, and I was a burden to the society. I'm sure all of you are same though. This story is about one of those small incidents that "happen to everyone."

One day when I was in my second year of high school<sup>\*1</sup>, I was with one of my friends who was out acquiring a pair of shoes for a class trip. On the way home, my friend wanted to try on his new pair of shoes, so he parked his bike on the side of the road and put them on. He said he was just going to leave the worn out pair there and tried to leave without them.

Shoes

"Hey, hey. That's not right."

I was overflowing with a sense of justice then, which made me to remonstrate my friend and grab his worn out pair of shoes. At very moment I grabbed them, a grand idea came to me, so we quickly started riding away on our bikes. The destination was the tallest bridge in the town, with a large river flowing far below.

We decided that this bridge would be a shoe cemetery. Being trained in all kinds of manners, I neatly placed the shoes together on the side of the bridge. Leaving the shoes like that could cause all kinds of commotion the next day<sup>\*2</sup>, so we decided to leave a note. The note we wrote read "these poor shoes were abandoned by their master. Someone please take them." We placed the note neatly in the envelope and left it by the shoes.

After one last look, we triumphantly returned to our homes.

As I was at home thinking about my masterpiece prank, I received a phone call from that friend.

"Crap!"

He said it in a panic, just like Hachibe from Hacchoubori (who?)<sup>\*3</sup>. I didn't know what he was so panicking about, so I told him to calm down.

"I got a call from the police,"  
is what he said.

No way. I was thinking there's no way that anyone can tell who did today's shoe cemetery prank. Though, he said,

"My mom had written my name on the inside."

Is he an idiot?

The situation had gotten much worse than I had imagined.

"You didn't give up my name, did you?"

I asked him just like certain politicians do, but my friend's silence was its own answer.

As it happens that I was also called the very day, and with my mother, we were prostrating ourselves in the residential police substation. My mother was especially apologetic:

"I'm very sorry. I'll make sure he throws them away in the garbage next time."

Umm, mom, I don't think that's where the problem is. Try not to fuel the policeman's wrath, please?

The grand idea ended up being the talk of the school and the next day we were called by the teacher. The teacher was mad beyond belief and lectured us with meaningless phrases like "no more wearing shoes for you guys!" I think he probably didn't even know what he was saying in his anger.

Why was he so angry? The reason was that this actually wasn't our first time (lol). So what happened the first time? I'll leave that for next time.

Well, I think all of you have had similar experiences anyway.

\*1 Japanese high schools starts from 10th grade.

\*2 When people commit suicide in Japan by jumping off of tall objects, it is customary and good manners to leave your shoes neatly together at the top.

\*3 I'm assuming he is a policeman-type of person in Edo period. You can see such person often in Jidai-geki (historical play).

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“Are we going to get caught?”

“There’s no way we’ll be caught because we’re,  
the wind.

No one can catch us.”

This is the story of “my first time to be in the care of the police” that I promised in “[Shoe Cemetery](#).” Since the statute of limitations has passed on all this, I’m going to write everything.

Back then, we were the wind for sure,  
trying to hit the 30 km/h limit.

“Will we get caught?”

“No way.

Because we’re

**on bikes.**”

That’s right. This was such a pointless experiment.

That day, one of our friends was caught on his scooter. A speed trap using a radar speed monitor. He was going 50 km/h in a 30 km/h zone on his scooter. This was the beginning of this incident.

Even with a scooter, it was easy to hit high speeds because it was a downhill. This caused him much anguish.

Listening to him complain, one of us said,

“hey, I wonder if you can get caught on a bike?”

Pointless, but a very intriguing question.

“Shouldn’t it because it’s metal?”

“But bikes don’t have speedometers, right?”

True.

“We don’t even have licenses.”

Very true.

Everyone was interested in this discussion. The only thing left to do was to “experiment.”

The location was the standard place they always set up the speed trap. A downhill where the speed limit changes to 30 km/h must have been a very sweet spot for the police.

Our scout came back to report.

“They’re still doing it! We can go now!”

That’s right. It had only been about an hour since he was caught. The speed trap was still going.

“Ok! Let’s go!”

We went with 20 people to test this experiment. Maybe it was for this reason that we had 5 speeds on our bikes, although for some reason I was the only one with a girl bike.

One of our classmates had a house right before where they set up the radar for the speed trap. That’s where we put our first base. We couldn’t see them around the corner, but they couldn’t see us, either.

Aah, the excitement was welling up in my chest.

This was our strategy.

This road’s speed limit is 30 km/h. If a slow car comes, then we send the signal and set off! We ride our bikes as fast as we can in front of the car! We figure that if we get passed, then there’s no point to the experiment, so we give ourselves about a 50 meter head start.

Then all we have to do is pedal like mad. We cross in front of the radar gun at full speed. That was the plan.

“Will we get caught?”

You’re probably anxious for what happens next! There’s a very unexpected answer there...

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We pedaled as fast as we could.

We felt that if we did, we could surpass even time itself,  
even though we knew that the pedals would eventually rust and stop functioning.

Here is the continuation of “We are the Wind.” The last time I received e-mails at my “company address” since I was in the middle of “Stray Goat”. Erm, the poetic introduction was done so that I might try to get the “Naoki Award,” but I’ll be happy as long as you can see that I can write something proper. Just like always, if you haven’t read the part 1, please read [part 1](#) first. If you think you can skip to this part first, you’ve got to live 10 more years.

So, can a bike be caught with a speed trap? We were currently finding the answer to this historic question, but we first needed to know how fast we could go on bikes. We decided to measure the speed using the scooter of the guy who was caught. We didn’t have time to do that with everyone, so we decided to measure with the guy who was on the track team, that “for sure would be the fastest.” His bike was a supercar “Roadman.” I’m sure Roadman’s maker (Bridgestone) never imagined their product being used in such a ridiculous way.

And so the Roadman’s top speed. It was an incredible 58 km/h (about 35mph). Wow! Actually it probably could have gone faster, but the scooter that we were measuring with was junk and couldn’t go any faster. Either way, we were all pleasantly surprised about this great record.

“We did it! We’re totally over the speed limit!”

“Yeah. We’re illegal for sure!”

“If we do it right, going 30 km/h over isn’t just a dream!”

This conversation itself isn’t normal. I wonder if it’s ever been said before in Japan...

Our “illegality” confirmed, all that was left was to go.

We decided that “impact was important” (is that the point of this?) so we put Roadman-kun first. After him, we decided that we should go two at a time instead of one. This was done to make escape easier, just in case. We were, for good or bad, used to situations like this.

While we were talking, our friend that was waiting in the back signaled that there was a car coming. Ok, start, leadoff guy.

At about the moment we could see the compact car, he was already furiously heading for the radar. He almost looked like a lone hero heading for his cause.

We all went to the road to watch his back and to check the results.

He was fast. Even the car that came behind him couldn’t catch up.

He then crossed right in front of the radar at full speed!

We confirmed that the policeman came out into the road for a moment, but he wasn’t caught.

We did it!

The result of our experiment was “we wouldn’t get caught.”

We waited for him to come back using the back roads. We were concerned about the policeman that rushed out.

Finally the lead guy came back, out of breath.

“How was it?”

Everyone was curious.

“He said something to me, but...”

What?

“But I ignored him.”

Hmm. That didn’t really tell us anything.

We didn’t quite get what we wanted, so we decided to send the second and third guy. Well, we were all planning on going anyways.

So the second and third guy pedaled together at full speed. They’d get caught if they pedal side by side, so they went one in front of another.

We watched from behind anxiously.

Then, the policeman rushed out again. They dodged and got past him.

Finally those two came back out of breath.

“We were told to stop.”

What!?

“But we ignored him.”

What a suspicious turn of affairs. Maybe we will get caught? No, we don’t have speedometers or licenses. Basically we don’t have any basis that they can catch us with.

Our reasoning was simple

“Ok, let’s send the next!”

The fourth and fifth guy had the same results. The difference was with the sixth guy.

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# “Bokuchu” Us vs the Police: 700-Day War

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Those who have read this far probably already figured this out, but our intentions weren't just to find out if our bikes would get caught by a speed trap. Our real goal was to get revenge against the government powers for our friend who was caught on his scooter. So even though we got the results we wanted by the fifth guy, we had no intentions of stopping.

Even for the police who were manning the speed trap, bikes that would come at full speed once in a while must have been unnatural. They were probably on to our evil deeds by now. On the other hand, the cars that ran behind us weren't caught even though they were speeding about as fast as we were, so for good or bad, we felt like we were helping society.

Either way, we had no idea what kind of punishment awaited us if we were caught, so we were forced to change our plan.

“Ok, let's increase the people that go at once.”

If we were in a group, it made it harder for the policemen to catch us. We decided that from the sixth guy, we were going to send out eight guys at once. I was also to participate in this one.

The eight of us started all at once in a column. What a magnificent sight the eight of us made! Even though we were on bikes, the impact was different.

Until then, we were biking quietly to escape notice, but we felt reborn and were screaming while riding.

“Buoooooooooh!”

There was almost something beautiful about this. It was like charging into the vanishing point or like Astro Boy charging into the sun in the last chapter.

But we had forgotten one important thing. That was, if we were able to come up with this plan, they would also be able to “figure out our plan.”

As we approached the vanishing point, the policemen came rushing out. Three of us were able to make it through, but four of us were caught. And being in the back with my girl bike, I was easily caught...

But. Even though we were in a situation like this, we were laughing. We didn't even have a license that they could take away points from.

One of the policemen asked.

“Why are you guys in such a hurry?”

“Oh, there's a lot waiting for me at home...”

“Oh? Like what?”

“Like... my dog... and ice cream. I left some out.”

“That's right. And I also left the stove on for my stew...”

Are you guys housewives? I wish they would've seen what kind of mood they were in before they started with these

lame jokes...

Without responding, the policeman said,  
“You guys come over here.”

This was the first time any of us had ever seen the inside of an official traffic checkpoint, so we were all looking around. It was like the headquarters at a sports tournament.

“Well, sit down.”  
“What’s going on? We were just racing on our bikes.”

I was the first to give the excuse that “we had planned,” but I was starting to get worried about the extremely (in some ways normal to us) thoughtless manner of my friends.

“Sit!”

At this time, I finally understood how a pet dog feels.

And this was the first “official questioning” of my life.

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“We are the Wind” has gone on for four days now. This is the final chapter. Thank you for waiting for so long; today I’ll reveal the correct answer to the question: “Will bicycles get speeding tickets?”

At this point, there were five of us including myself that were caught by the police. For most people, especially when young, being alone and being with 5 friends was totally different. Even though we were in the dire situation of “being caught by police,” we were smiling young guys – in other word, we had big attitudes.

There were five of us and two policemen, one of which was our local resident policeman (Chuzai-san <sup>\*1</sup>). The first officer to interrogate us was the young Chuzai-san.

“What were... you guys doing?”

“Like we said, we were just racing on our bikes.”

Next to speak was the older policeman.

“Bikes are considered light vehicles. You understand?”

This policeman’s explanation was one of the answers to our questions. Because bikes were considered light vehicles, they must follow the speed limit when there was one. That’s number one. Therefore, the punishment is the same as a light vehicle. There was no speed limit on bikes if one wasn’t posted (I didn’t know this).

Though, that didn’t concern the policeman. It seemed that they were concerned about something other than the “Road Traffic Law.”

But because we were supported by the fact that “we didn’t have licenses or speedometers on bikes,” we were just casually brushing off their explanation and waiting for a chance to use those excuses.

“You guys are students at ○○ high school, right?”

“No, we’re from the boat club at Waseda University <sup>\*2</sup>! We’re currently on our spring training!”

Hey hey... read the air... Where the heck did Waseda University come from...?

**\*SNAP\***

It was almost as if we could hear the policeman snap.

**“You’re under arrest.”**

What?

That’s right. We were placed under arrest for such a ridiculous joke.

????

I agree that it was a ridiculous joke, but should we be arrested because of it? Doesn’t the country of Japan guarantee the freedom of jokes?

“Your actions were intentionally obstructing official police business.”

“Therefore, at 0:00PM, I place you under arrest for interference of a public servant in the execution of his duties.”

Eh? Was he joking?

Not a chance. It’s true. Officially, it was obstructing a police officer in the management of enforcing violations. It was a fact that because of us, a couple cars were not caught speeding.

After hearing this, our laughing stopped and our attitudes changed immediately.

“We’re contacting your school now.”

“There were some others, weren’t there? Are they in the same boat club? Hrmm?”

Chuzai-san said excitedly.

“No... they’re from the hockey club at Komazawa...”

**\*SNAP\*SNAP\***

My friend’s answer further infuriated Chuzai-san.

It turns out this friend has a brother, who is a police officer. That’s why he had a higher immunity towards policemen. Us ordinary guys are intimidated just from the uniform, but he’s used to seeing one every day. Unfortunately for him, Chuzai-san knew about his brother, being in the same jurisdiction.

“I’m going to call your brother in, too!”

The situation is already in the pits. Every word that we said made it worse.

One hour later, we were transported to the residential police substation, where in front of four teachers and our guardians we were lectured till dusk. In the end, we even got “suspended” from school. It was supposedly the first time since the founding of the school that someone was “suspended while biking.” ... Of course it is. Though, since we were suspended from school, they took away our charge of “interference of a public servant in the execution of his duties.”

When we were about to leave, the policeman spoke to me.

“Hey you with the girl bike.”

“Yes?”

“You weren’t even going 30 km/h.”

So they can measure our speed! Hey, I wasn’t even **over the limit!**

— The End —

And so starts “Us vs. the Police: 700-Day War.”

The first chapter begins here->

\*1 Chuzai is not a last name. It’s a way to call a local resident policeman.

\*2 Waseda University is one of the better-known universities in Japan.

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